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**Relationships & Sexuality Education Plan**

**Date Ratified: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

***Fr. Richard Sheehy***

**Chairperson Board of Management**

**1. Introduction & Rationale**

Recognising that Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE) is a collective and shared responsibility, between all members of the whole school community, this RSE Plan review and formulation was led by the school Middle Management Team, informed by the views of staff and the Board of Management (BOM).

The Catholic ethos of St Brigid’s G.N.S is characterised by respect and care for each individual. The child’s many needs are met in a well-structured environment where she/he can live fully the life of a child and develop as a whole person-academically, socially, emotionally and spiritually. While nourishing the child’s young life, we strive to foster an atmosphere that will enable each child develop to his/her full potential in a safe environment. The environment is such that the child is encouraged and stimulated to be confident, appreciative, independent and creative. The Relationships and Sexuality (RSE) programme will be implemented within this framework

The Plan sets out a structured programme and procedures for RSE, to: inform all members of the school community, provide a ready basis for teacher planning, and familiarise new teachers with the approach adopted at St. Brigid’s G.N.S.

**2. Definition of RSE**

RSE aims to provide opportunities for children to learn about relationships and sexuality in ways that help them think and act in a moral, caring and responsible way. This work will be based on developing a good image, promoting respect for themselves and others, and providing them with appropriate information for their age-group.

**3. RSE in the context of our SPHE programme**

Throughout the school year, Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) is taught as a subject from Junior Infants to 6th class. A wide variety of topics are included on this programme, at age-appropriate levels. It is a spiral curriculum which ensures that topics are taught in a developmental manner throughout a child’s primary school years. RSE is an integral part of SPHE. SPHE is taught through school atmosphere and culture, integration and discrete teaching time. Formal RSE lessons and informal RSE messages must be consistent with the whole school approach to SPHE.

**4. Aims and Objectives**

* To enhance the personal development, self-esteem and well-being of each child.
* To help children develop healthy friendships and relationships
* To foster an understanding of, and a healthy attitude to, human sexuality and relationships in a moral, spiritual and social framework.
* To enable the older child to acquire an understanding of, and respect for, human love, sexual intercourse and reproduction
* To develop and promote in the child a sense of wonder and awe at the process of birth and new life
* To enable the child to be comfortable with the sexuality of oneself and others while growing and developing.

**4. Content**

RSE forms part of the national curriculum for SPHE and will be taught from infants to 6th class. The SPHE curriculum is taught on a two-year cycle in St Brigid’s GNS, as outlined in Table 1 below but the RSE programme is taught every year. RSE will be covered under the following strands and strand units of the SPHE curriculum:

Strand: Myself

Strand Units: Growing and changing / Taking care of my body

**Table 1 - SPHE 2 YEAR PLAN**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Even Years (Year 1)  September 2020/2022 | Odd Years (Year 2)  September 2019/2021 |
| Myself: Self Identity/My Friends  September/October | Myself and Others: Relating to Others  September/October |
| Myself and Others: My Friends & Other People  Myself and the Wider World: Media Education  November/December | Myself and Others: Myself and my Family  Myself and the Wider World: Media Education  November/December |
| Myself: Safety and Protection  Stay Safe Programme: whole programme  January/February | Myself: Safety and Protection  Recap on main Stay Safe messages  January/February |
| Myself: Taking Care of My Body – RSE  March/April | Myself: Taking Care of My Body – RSE  March/April |
| Myself: Growing and Changing  May/June | Myself: Making Decisions (3rd to 6th class)  May/June  Road/Fire/Water Safety (Junior Infants to 2nd)  May/June |

**5. Guidelines for the teaching of RSE**

* R.S.E. is taught as an integral part of the Social, Personal and Health Education**.**It is recognised that parents are the primary educators of their children, and that the home is the natural environment in which RSE should take place. The role of the school, therefore, is seen as one of support for the work of the home in this area.
* Parents’ attention will be drawn to the RSE policy at the Junior Infant Parents induction evening. Discrete lessons with regard to sensitive areas of RSE (physical changes at puberty, menstruation, intercourse, conception for senior classes) will be timetabled for a two-week period during March/April each year.
* All parents will be advised via e-mail a week before the sensitive RSE topics are taught. They are invited to talk to the class teacher/principal if they have any concerns or questions in relation to the content.
* A copy of the Busy Bodies Booklet will be furnished to parents of 6th classes in advance of this. This provides the parents with the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the content of the sensitive topics of the RSE programme.
* Appropriate vocabulary relating to sexuality, growing up, physical changes, parts of the body and feelings will be used. The use of slang words will be discouraged. (See appendix 2/3 for language taught).
* Questions arising from lesson content will be answered in an age-appropriate

manner. The class teacher cannot answer questions which do not relate to the particular curriculum objectives for a class. Pupils will be informed if a question/issue is not on the programme and they will be advised to talk with their parents.

* Presently in St. Brigid’s G.N.S. all teachers deliver this programme to their own class. However, provisions will be made for teachers who may have difficulty with teaching the sensitive areas of the programme.
* The approach in school is child-centred and will always take the age and stage of development of the children into account.

**6. Withdrawal of a child from the lessons dealing with sensitive topics**

The RSE programme is inclusive and so we actively discourage withdrawal. Should a parent seek to have their child withdrawn from the RSE lessons, the school will take account of parental concerns, and parents’ right to withdraw their child from themes pertaining to sensitive issues will be honoured on the understanding that the parent is taking full responsibility for this aspect of education themselves. The onus will be on the parent to inform the school in writing of this decision. This letter from the parents will be attached to the child’s enrolment form and recorded on Aladdin. If a child is withdrawn from the lesson, the school cannot guarantee that other children will not inform the child in question of the content of the lessons or that the children in the class may not refer incidentally in class to aspects of the lesson during subsequent days/weeks. (See appendix 3 for Teaching R.S.E. to 5th/6th classes).

**7. Differentiation for pupils presenting with SEN**

Adaptions to the way in which the content is delivered will be made for children with Special Educational Needs. Consultation with parents/ guardians in advance and anticipation of the children’s needs will be central to ensuring learning is meaningful.

* Children may be pre-taught language or concepts in anticipation of whole class work
* Children may work in smaller groups or 1:1 on adapted and suitable material
* Any different or specific objectives related to the pupils own learning needs should be detailed in their School Support Plan Plus, in consultation with parents/guardians.

**8. Integration with other subjects**

Many aspects of RSE can be dealt with in a cross-curricular manner while other aspects need discrete instruction. RSE teaching can be integrated with the following subjects:

* Science
* Visual Arts
* Physical Education
* Religion
* Drama
* English
* Values Education

**9. Supporting Programmes and Policies**

The following policies support RSE and were drawn up in consultation with staff/parents/guardians and the Board of Management:

:

* Stay Safe Programme
* Walk Tall Programme
* Webwise
* Busy Bodies
* RESPECT Guidelines
* Grow in Love Programme
* Adapted resources for SEN (www.pdst.ie)
* SPHE Curriculum
* RESPECT guidelines
* Code of Behaviour and Discipline Policy.
* Nutrition Policy
* Anti –Bullying Policy.
* Child Safeguarding Statement
* Enrolment Policy
* Acceptable Usage Policy

**10. Approaches and Methodologies**

Active learning which includes: art and music, drama activities, co-operative games, use of pictures, photographs and visual images, written activities, discussions, use of media and information technologies and looking at children’s work.

* Linkage within the broader SPHE curriculum
* Integration with other curricular areas e.g SESE, Art, Religion and Drama.
* Direct Teaching for the discrete, sensitive areas of the programme.
* Discussion, group work, role play, circle time, use of ICT.

**11. Provision for Staff Training and Development**

Provision is made for staff to attend training, where necessary.

Training in the Relationships and Sexuality programme- some staff

Training with the Walk Tall Programme

Training in the Children First Guidelines (DES Guidelines and Procedures) - all staff.

Training in new Stay/Safe and Walk Tall Programmes (Principal/Post holder)

Sharing of information:

New publications, reference texts, RSE information, circulars etc. are circulated to staff via Aladdin, staff meetings and SPHE resources area in the staffroom.

**12. Assessment and Recording**

Assessment strategies provides information on the pupil’s progress. These assessments are generally of an informal nature and include:

* Observation and questions
* Use of teacher-designed tasks such as worksheets, quizzes or games
* Use of reflection or learning log

Work covered in RSE as part of SPHE is recorded as part of every teacher’s *cuntais míosiúil,* a copy of which is furnished to the Principal at the end of every month.

**13. Roles and Responsibilities**

* It is the responsibility of the BOM to ratify the Plan and support its implementation
* It is the responsibility of the Principal to oversee the implementation of the Plan and support staff in the teaching of RSE
* It is the responsibility of teachers to deliver the implement the plan
* Parents are the primary educators of their children, and so the home is the natural environment in which RSE should take place.
* The wider school community including caretaker, secretary, and SNA’s have a role to play in supporting the social, personal and health development of pupils. In their interactions they must reflect the principles promoted by the SPHE curriculum
* A member of the Middle Management Team has responsibility for the development and organisation of SPHE encompassing RSE, within the school.

**14. Review and Ratification**

This RSE Plan was drafted during 2019, by the Middle Management Team, informed by the views of staff and was ratified by the Board of Management on 17th June 2019.

The Board will monitor its implementation and will review it again, on or before June 2021.

**APPENDIX 1**

**References**

* Curriculum documents for SPHE
* Making the Links – A practical guide to the use of programmes supported by the Department of Education and Science in the implementation of the SPHE curriculum
* Primary School Curriculum, Your child’s learning, Guidelines for Parents
* Looking at our School, 2003, DES
* Map of SPHE Resources for Primary Schools, North Eastern Health Board
* Relationships and Sexuality Education in Catholic Schools, Veritas
* Relationships and Sexuality Education, A Partnership Between Home and School, DES

Walk Tall, Programme for the Prevention of Substance Misuse

* Bí Folláin, A Programme of Social & Health Education for Primary Schools,
* Stay Safe Kit
* Bí Folláin Level 1
* Bí Folláin Level 2
* Walk Tall 2 (x 2)
* Walk Tall 3
* RSE 1st/2nd
* Making the Links (guide to use of Stay Safe, Walk Tall, RSE)
* Be Safe (x 3)
* Me (Lessons, Songs, Activities)
* Health 2 (Developing awareness of physical, social & emotional health Age 6-7)
* I Take Responsibility For Me & It Shows (strategies for enhancing self-esteem)
* I Like Who I Am & It Shows (strategies for enhancing self-esteem)

Selection of story books

* Before I Was A Kid
* My Two Families
* “Let’s Talk About” Death and Dying
* “Let’s Talk About” Feeling Safe
* “Let’s Talk About” Bullying
* My Friends and Me (A First Look at Friendship)
* My Brother, My Sister and Me (A First Look at Sibling Rivalry)
* I Miss You (A First Look at Death)
* My Family’s Changing (A First Look at Family Break-Up)

**RSE/Walk Tall/Stay Safe Manuals are collected at the end of every school year for inventory purposes by a member of the Middle Management Team and appropriate manuals distributed at the start of September annually**

**Appendix 2 R.S.E. Programme - Junior Infants, Senior Infants, First and Second Classes**

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| **Junior Infants** | **Strand: Myself**  **Strand unit: Growing and changing** | **Theme: New Life**   * The child should be enabled to develop an awareness of human birth – *that a baby grows and is nurtured in the mother’s womb until ready to be born*   **Theme: Theme: I Grow**   * The child should realise that growth and change are part of the process of life |
| **Language used**: **womb, little seed**  (Choose from lessons pages 68-76, 77-84, Relationships & Sexuality Education, Junior and Senior Infants), Walk Tall, Unit 1 Les. 4/5 | |
| **Senior Infants** | **Strand: Myself**  **Strand unit: Growing and changing** | **Theme: Caring for New Life**   * Identify what babies need to help them grow and develop *– love, regular food, warmth, sleep, regular nappy changing, careful bathing, medical check-ups*. |
| **Strand: Myself**  **Strand unit: Taking care of my body** | **Theme: My Body**   * The child should be enabled to name parts of the male and female body using appropriate anatomical terms |
| **Language used : penis, breasts, vagina**  (Choose from lessons 138-145, 148-156, Relationships & Sexuality Education, Junior and Senior Infants) | |
| **First Class** | **Strand: Myself**  **Strand unit: Growing and changing** | **Theme: The Wonder of New Life**   * The pupil should be enabled to appreciate and celebrate the wonder of new life in nature |
| **Strand: Myself**  **Strand unit: Taking care of my body** | **Theme:** **How my Body Works**   * The pupil should be provided with the opportunities to learn about the senses and their functions |
| **Strand: Myself**  **Strand unit: Growing and changing** | **Theme: Growing Means Changing**   * The child should be provided with opportunities to recognise that growing up brings increased responsibility for himself/herself and others |
| **Language used: womb, penis, vulva/vagina, breasts, urethra**  (Choose from lessons pages 60-65, 68-75, 78-85 Relationships & Sexuality Education, First and Second Classes, Walk Tall: Unit 2, L1) | |
| **Second Class** | **Strand: Myself**  **Strand unit: Growing and changing** | **Theme: The Wonder of New Life**   * The child should be enabled to appreciate what is necessary in order to provide and care for new born babies   and to become aware of the cycle of life |
| **Strand: Myself**  **Strand unit: Taking care of my body** | **Theme: When my Body Needs Special Care**   * The child should be enabled to name parts of the male and female body using appropriate anatomical terms |
| **Strand: Myself**  **Strand unit: Growing and changing** | **Theme: As I grow my life changes**   * The child should begin to realise that growth takes place in many different ways – physical, social, intellectual, spiritual |
| **Language used: penis, vulva/vagina, breasts, urethra**  (Choose from lessons pages 152-160, 161-170, Relationships & Sexuality Education, First and second Classes)  Walk Tall: Unit 3 – Lesson 1, Unit 2 – Lesson 1 | |

**Appendix 3 R.S.E. ProgrammeThird, Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Classes**

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| **Third Class** | **Strand: Myself**  **Strand unit: Growing and changing** | **Theme: The Wonder of New Life**   * The child should be enabled to learn about the care that needs to be taken by a mother who is waiting for her baby to be born   **Theme: As I Grow I change**   * The child will be provided with the opportunities to understand the physical, psychological and social changes that are experienced throughout childhood**:** |
| **Language used: pregnancy, umbilical cord, navel**  ( Choose from lessons pages 70-79, 94-100, Relationships & Sexuality Education, Third and Fourth Classes) | |
| **Fourth Class** | **Strand: Myself**  **Strand unit: Growing and changing** | **Theme: The Wonder of New Life**   * The child should be enabled to discuss the stages and sequences of development of the human baby, from conception to birth. |
| **Strand: Myself**  **Strand unit: Taking care of my body** | **Theme: As I Grow I Change**   * The child should be enabled to understand the physical, emotional and social changes that take place in both males and females during growth to adulthood. * The subject of menstruation will be introduced in fourth class |
| **Language used : breast feeding, fertilised egg, scan, womb, vagina, cells, menstruation**  (Choose from lessons 169-181, Relationships & Sexuality Education, Third and Fourth Classes). Menstruation – Fifth/Sixth manual | |
| **Fifth Class** | **Strand: Myself**  **Strand unit: Taking care of my body** | **Theme: My Body Grows and Changes - Puberty**   * The child should be enabled to identify and discuss the physical, psychological, emotional and social changes that occur in boys and girls with the onset of puberty and understand that these take place at different rates for everyone. * The child should understand the reproductive system of male and female adults |
| **Strand: Myself**  **Strand unit: Growing and changing** | **Theme: The Wonder of New Life**   * The pupil should be enabled to understand sexual intercourse, conception and birth within the context of a committed loving relationship |
| **Language used: hormones, ovaries, egg /ova, fallopian tubes, uterus, menstruation, menstrual cycle, periods, cervix, vagina, penis, testicles, scrotum, erection, ejaculation, sperm production, semen, wet dreams, sexual intercourse, conception.**  ( Choose from lessons pages 82-92, 94-101, Relationships & Sexuality Education, Fifth and Sixth Classes, Busy Bodies CD/Booklet) | |
| **Sixth Class** | **Strand: Myself**  **Strand unit: Taking care of my body** | **Theme: My Body Grows and Changes - Puberty**   * The child should be enabled to identify and discuss the physical, psychological, emotional and social changes that occur in boys and girls with the onset of puberty and understand that these take place at different rates for everyone. * The child should understand the reproductive system of male and female adults |
| **Strand: Myself**  **Strand unit: Growing and changing** | **Theme: The Wonder of New Life**   * The pupil should be enabled to understand sexual intercourse, conception and birth within the context of a committed loving relationship |
| **Language used: hormones, ovaries, egg /ova, fallopian tubes, uterus, menstruation, menstrual cycle, periods, cervix, vagina, penis, testicles, scrotum, erection, ejaculation, sperm production, semen, wet dreams, sexual intercourse, conception.**  ( Choose from lessons pages 82-92, 94-101, Relationships & Sexuality Education, Fifth and Sixth Classes, Busy Bodies CD/Booklet) | |